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March 12, 1981

EPISCOPAL PEACE FELLOWSHIP GROWS

SEWANEE, Tenn. -- Episcopal Peace Fellowship nationwide membership increased 12 percent during 1980 and the number of active local chapters is at a 42-year high of 18.

The current totals were released by the Fellowship's national chairman, the Rev. John M. Gessell, School of Theology, University of the South; here, upon receipt of a report from a sub-group of its national executive committee which has been working to increase both members and chapters.

"This evidence of resurging acceptance of peace as personal mission," Gessell said, "in combination with the important ongoing work of our Church's Joint Commission on Peace is both heartening and timely in the face of steadily increasing dangers from militarism's permeation of our society and our world. I welcome this indication of new activism for peace within our Church. I believe that EPF growth is in response to the recognition of the rapidly rising possibility of war."

Gessell also announced a new "sister chapter initiative" for which each of the existing 18 chapters will be asked to help start another local group in a nearby city. To assist this expansion, the Fellowship's national office will be contacting isolated members and inviting them to initiate communications with their nearest, local fellow members.

The report about the Peace Fellowship's membership and chapters was prepared by the Rev. Alex MacDonnell, rector, St. Luke's Church, Haworth, N.J.

Additional information about chapter formation, including a "how to" manual, may be obtained from the Episcopal Peace Fellowship's National Executive Secretary, the Rev. Denise Giardina, at Hearst Hall, Wisconsin Avenue and Woodley Road, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016 or by calling 202/363-5532.

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